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ABSTRACT

Intended to provide a guide to the most useful, practical, and relevant methodologies developed and implemented over the past 20 years for assessing a library's effectiveness, this bibliography provides citations to 72 selected studies evaluating the use, collections, and services of academic libraries. The citations are organized into three major groups: (1) measures of access, use, and users, which include studies of book and periodical use, in-house use, book availability, document delivery, and the user; (2) measures of collection evaluation, including the variety of means available for assessing the breadth, scope, and quality of collections; and (3) measures of reference, including both obtrusive and unobtrusive studies assessing the volume, types, and quality of reference services. (EW)

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES:
A Twenty Year Retrospective

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INTRODUCTION

Performance Measures for Academic Libraries: A Twenty Year Retrospective is a selected bibliography to the literature in the field of academic library evaluation. It is intended for use as a practical guide to those methodologies tested in the field for assessing the effectiveness of academic libraries in terms of their use, their collections and their services. It includes what the author has concluded are the most useful, practical and relevant methodologies developed and implemented over the last twenty years.

A variation of this bibliography in annotated form was originally developed in 1984 as part of doctoral research being conducted by the author on academic library standards for regional accreditation and the use of performance measures for evaluation purposes.[1] Since that time, the bibliography has changed form and been updated a number of times in the course of its use in workshops on academic library self-study and evaluation conducted by the author for the Middle States Association and for various national and regional professional library organizations and associations. It has always been

[1] Kania, Antoinette M. "Academic Library Standards and Performance Measures," College and Research Libraries, 49:16-23, January, 1988)

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received with a warm welcome by those in the workshops whose general knowledge of the topic was small, but whose general interest and needs in the area were very high. Over and over again, academic librarians have commented on the various ways in which they have employed the bibliography as a guide to identifying the relevant and specific methodologies they might use when called upon to evaluate their libraries for institutional, state or accreditation related self-study purposes.

The citations to the performance measures in the bibliography are organized into three major groups - the measures of access, use and the user; the measures of collection evaluation; and the measures of reference. The measures of access, use and the user include studies of book and periodical use, in-house use, book availability, document delivery, and the user. The collection evaluation section refers to the variety of means available for assessing the breadth, scope and quality of collections, while the measures of reference section cites obtrusive and unobtrusive studies to assess both the volume, types and quality of reference service.

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